

# **National Drought Resilience Partnership (NDRP)**

## **Enhancing Community Preparedness for Drought**

### The Need to Prepare

Drought affects all facets of our society, from food production to water quality to public health, and there is a growing need to help communities, agriculture, businesses, and individuals threatened by drought to plan accordingly. From 1980-2000, major droughts and heat waves within the U.S. alone resulted in costs exceeding \$100 billion. In 2012, approximately two-thirds of the continental U.S. was affected by chronic drought. Severe droughts are projected for the next several decades, impacting the nation's communities and economy.

### Federal Collaboration: The National Drought Resilience Partnership

The need for strengthened drought resilience has never been greater. To enable a more unified federal response to this national challenge, President Obama established the National Drought Resilience Partnership (NDRP) in November 2013 as part of his Climate Action Plan. The NDRP is comprised of: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of the Interior, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Energy.

With a focus on building long-term drought resilience, this federal partnership is dedicated to helping communities better prepare for future droughts and reducing the impact of drought events on livelihoods and the economy. The NDRP is:

- Strengthening coordination of federal drought policies and programs in support of state, tribal, and community efforts;
- Serving as a single federal point of contact on drought resilience;
- Leveraging the work of existing federal investments such as the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), the development of a National Soil Moisture Network, and the Bureau of Reclamation-Natural Resource Conservation Service partnership to improve agricultural water use efficiencies.
- Linking information such as monitoring, forecasts, outlooks, and early warnings with long-term drought resilience strategies in critical sectors such as agriculture, municipal water systems, energy, recreation, and manufacturing.

Communities can access information about federal resources, through the NIDIS website at [www.drought.gov](http://www.drought.gov) and a phone hotline, (202) 564-8086. The public can also

search information on federal drought and disaster assistance through a user friendly [clearinghouse](#) piloted by USDA.

### Supporting State and Local Drought Strategies

The NDRP is actively engaged with states and partners in identifying the tools and actions they need to enhance community drought planning and water resource management, whether it is supporting specific elements of a state drought strategy such as protecting forest health or improving urban and agricultural water use efficiency in California and other heavily impacted western states, or working to demonstrate how preparedness can be improved when federal agencies go “all in” to develop a long-term drought strategy, as we are doing in Montana.

Key federal components of collaborative engagement include:

- Preparedness, Mitigation, and Risk Management: supporting regional state, local, and tribal preparedness and planning,
- Actionable, Science-Based Information and Tools: converting data into knowledge for timely and informed decision-making,
- Sustainable Water Infrastructure: managing resources for a more secure water future
- Managing Lands & Waters: resilient farms, ranches, and forests that support healthy watersheds and ecosystems; and
- Programs, Incentives, Outreach, and Education: 21st century approaches to drought preparedness and water security

### Engaging with Key Stakeholders

On July 15, 2015, the NDRP hosted a Drought Symposium to bring together high-level experts on water and drought issues at all levels of government, academia, the agricultural sector, conservation organizations, and the private sector. Participants took part in strategy sessions on building long-term drought resilience through watershed community drought planning and leveraging public and private innovation and investment.

This symposium was part of ongoing engagement with governors, mayors, county leaders, Tribes, NGOs, business leaders and academic institutions to identify effective approaches to building long term drought resilience.